

REMARKS

In the May 22, 2003 Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-6 and 14-20, and objected to claims 7-13 and 21. This Response amends claims 2-11 and 14-19. After entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1-21 (including 4 independent claims) remain pending in the application. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Drawings

The Examiner objected to the drawings for minor informalities. Red-marked corrected versions of informal drawing sheets (including corrected FIGS. 1, 2, and 3d) are enclosed herewith for the Examiner's review. Applicant will provide formal versions of the corrected drawings upon allowance of the application.

Claim Objections

The Examiner raised a number of objections to the claims. The amendments to the claims address the Examiner's concerns and Applicant requests the withdrawal of the claim objections.

§112 Rejection

Claim 18 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Claim 18 has been amended to recite "a map display" at the first occurrence of this term. Accordingly, the Examiner's concern over antecedent basis is addressed by this amendment and Applicant requests the withdrawal of the §112 rejection of claim 18.

§102(b) Rejection

Claims 1-6 and 15-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Henderson et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,726,979 (hereinafter "Henderson"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 1, 15, 18, and 19 are independent claims, claims 5-6 variously depend from claim 1, and claims 16 and 17 variously depend from claim 15. Claim 1, which is representative, is discussed in detail below.

Henderson discloses a network management system ("NMS") that employs an object model representation of the network configuration. Henderson makes a very brief reference to a graphical rendering of communication links and communications equipment on a geographical map at Column 7, Lines 51-54. Aside from that passing reference, Henderson does not teach or suggest the use of geography to represent the network elements. Certainly, Henderson does not teach or suggest the use of a hierarchical geography scheme to represent network elements. Consequently, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's comparison of Henderson to the claimed invention is misplaced.

Referring to paragraph 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner contends that Henderson discloses: the establishment of a hierarchy of geographical areas in the communications network (citing to FIGS. 2A-B and Column 7, Lines 28-54); an area at a higher level of the hierarchy includes a plurality of areas at a lower level of the hierarchy (citing to Column 7, Lines 28-54, Column 8, Lines 1-23, and Column 15, Lines 16-22); representing each network element in a geographical area at a first level in the geographical hierarchy (citing to Column 8, Lines 48-67); and summarizing the representation of network elements at a second level in the geographical hierarchy, higher than the first level of the geographical hierarchy (citing to Column 10, Lines 5-14). The Examiner's conclusions and, more particularly, the specific citations to Henderson, are curious.

Simply put, Henderson does not teach any of the above limitations. Henderson does not utilize a hierarchical geographical map, where "geographical" is used in the ordinary sense to represent an area or location, e.g., a country, state, county, city, or the like. Nor does Henderson teach "monitoring a geographical map which summarizes the status of a plurality of network elements" as recited in Applicant's claim 18. For example, FIG. 2A of Henderson represents a TMN-compliant object model view of a network and not a geographical map or geographical representation of areas or locations corresponding to a network. FIG. 2B of Henderson is a CORBA-compliant class hierarchy representation of a network – as explained at Column 7, Line 28 to Column 8, Line 32, this class hierarchy does not relate to the geography of the network at all. Should the Examiner decide to maintain this rejection, Applicant respectfully urges the Examiner to revisit the Henderson reference and to provide an explanation of how the cited excerpts in Henderson actually teach the recited claim limitations.

For at least the above reasons, Henderson does not anticipate any of: independent claim 1, claims 2-14 (which variously depend from claim 1), independent claim 15, claims 16-17 (which variously depend from claim 15), independent claim 18, or independent claim 19. Accordingly, Applicant requests the withdrawal of the §102 rejection of those claims.

§103(a) Rejection

Claims 14 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Henderson in view of Cutrer et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,668,562. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As discussed above, Henderson does not disclose a number of limitations recited in claims 14 and 20. Therefore, the proposed combination of Henderson and Cutrer lacks at least one element recited in claim 14 and at least one element recited in claim 20, and the Examiner has failed to satisfy the *prima facie* requirements for obviousness.

For at least the above reasons, claims 14 and 20 are allowable over the combination of Henderson in view of Cutrer, and Applicant requests the withdrawal of the §103 rejection of those claims.

In conclusion, all pending claims are believed to be allowable over the prior art of record. No fee is due in connection with the filing of this Response. Nonetheless, in an abundance of caution, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 50/2258.

Respectfully submitted,



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